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ABSTRACT

In 1974 a study was made of alternatives for centralized book processing for the South Central Regional Library (SCRL) of Ontario, Canada. The planners first examined the general benefits of centralized processing as to staff, time, space, standardization cost, coordination, and utilization of new technology, and then examined these benefits specifically in relation to the SCRL. After a study of three possible centers, the planners recommended the Niagara Regional Library System as the central processor for SCRL, and made further recommendations as to budgets and costs as well as for further cooperation with other libraries and regional centers. An appendix contains standards for cataloging, classification, and filing. (LS)

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BOOK PROCESSING ALTERNATIVES FOR THE LIBRARIES OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL REGION OF ONTARIO

IR 008 086

INFORMATION MEDIA & LIBRARY PLANNERS

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BOOK PROCESSING ALTERNATIVES FOR THE LIBRARIES OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL REGION OF ONTARIO

December, 1974

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Mr. A.L. McCallion
Chairman
South Central Regional Library
220 Dundurn Street South
Hamilton, Ontario
L8P 4K7

December 6, 1974

Dear Mr. McCallion,

We take pleasure in submitting our final report, Centralized Processing Alternatives for the Public Libraries of the South Central Region of Ontario.

We hope the evidence, suggestions and recommendations contained in this document will be of value to the Board and will assist in the adoption of sound policies in this important area of regional coordination.

Yours sincerely,

A. Bowron
Information, Media and Library Planners

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INTRODUCTION

On March 19, 1973 the first meeting of the Technical Services Committee of the South Central Regional Library was held at the regional headquarters. Its task was to "gather information and investigate ways in which member libraries can select, purchase and process books with the maximum efficiency and minimum cost" and report to the Regional Librarians' Committee. This first meeting was chaired by Richard Moses, Chief Librarian of the Oakville Public Library. In addition to Oakville, the public libraries of Burlington, Wentworth County and Hamilton as well as the regional library were represented.

The committee met irregularly and the libraries represented changed. Many alternative methods were discussed such as contracting with the Hamilton Public Library, the Midwestern Regional Library or the Niagara Regional Library, such as using a commercial processing service, developing an in-region centre, sharing cataloguing data or buying card sets. The discussions of the Technical Services Committee, the Chief Librarians' Committee and the SCRLS Board, although indecisive and difficult, were a necessary prelude in the quest for "maximum efficiency and minimum cost", and along the way underscored the complex nature of the cooperative processing problem and the difficulties in obtaining convincing evidence which would support or proscribe any particular solution.

However, by February of 1974 all parties concerned were prepared to use an independent investigator to advise the Board on future book processing policy and all libraries in the region were prepared to commit at least a portion of their book budgets to test any sound cooperative scheme recommended.

Subsequently, between the Technical Services Committee and the SCRLS Board, terms of reference were worked out for an in-depth study of processing alternatives available to the libraries of the region.

The Terms of Reference, as communicated in a letter dated July 8, 1974 from the Secretary-Treasurer of the SCRLS Board, are as follows:

1. To assess present book selection and technical services operations, and their attendant costs in the Dundas, Milton and Oakville Public Libraries.

2. To assess the cost savings and advantages there would be if the same operations were performed by

   a. Hamilton Public Library

   b. Midwestern Regional Library System

   c. Niagara Regional Library System

   d. Inter-regional catalogue card exchange as suggested by E. Bow, Provincial Library Service

3. To deliver your recommendations by late October or before, if possible, to the South Central Regional Library Board, also to the member boards involved regarding their own departments.*

In accepting these terms of reference it was agreed that no attention would be given to other alternative arrangements for regional processing or to other libraries in the region. Dundas, Milton and Oakville were selected as test libraries because it was determined that they were representative of the other libraries and that any recommendations considered as valid for them could be valid for all.

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*The completion date was later revised to December 6, 1974.

I CENTRALIZED PROCESSING IN ONTARIO - THE PRESENT SITUATION

Section 44 of the Public Libraries Act of 1966 lists the permissive powers of a Regional Library Board. Sub-section (c) allows for the provision of central services by one board to another and clause (i) suggests the selection, ordering, cataloguing, processing, circulating, storing and disposing of books, films and other materials as services one board may supply another.

Under section 44 a number of regional boards in Ontario have in the past developed centralized cataloguing and processing centres for the public libraries in their regions, to some schools and to library authorities in other regions.

Since the publication of A Survey of Libraries in the Province of Ontario, 1965 (The St. John Report), which recommended that all public libraries adopt a single cataloguing, classification and processing standard "so that a single processing centre can be established for all public libraries in the Province.", a number of centres have emerged on the regional library level and have offered a full processing service from selection to finishing. Those organized in the Northwestern, Niagara, Midwestern and Lake Erie regions were examples of such centres. In 1971 the processing centre of the Lake Erie Regional Library System was abandoned and in 1972 Northwestern's centre was forced to close. The reasons for these two failures were, in our view, not entirely due to economics or efficiency but also related to the fact that some of the participating libraries were not sufficiently committed to the idea of cooperative processing nor prepared for the rather deep changes which this kind of collective participation can bring to the staff, budgets, routines and services of the individual libraries as well as the regional organization itself.

On the surface it seems obvious that the routine, repetitive and in some ways mechanical acquisition and preparation of books for public use by a group of libraries could easily be coordinated and achieved in one place efficiently and cheaply for any cooperating group of libraries with the same social goals. However, the problem involves more than a consideration of statistics or dollars or efficiency. It involves the relinquishing of a piece of one's independence to a larger and more specialized unit beyond one's direct control and a restriction of the freedom to build a collection without reference to other collections. It involves the professional reputation of individual librarians and the wish to ensure that service to the public will not suffer. In short cooperative processing becomes a contentious issue which requires thorough debate and then willing commitment.

At the moment there are only two regional processing centres operated by library authorities; one in the Midwestern region at Kitchener and one in the Niagara region at St. Catharines.

However, provincially there is more interest in the concept of centralized processing than there has been at any time since the publication of the St. John Report.

The Directors of Ontario's Regional Libraries (DORLS), an ad hoc committee seeking closer coordination of all public libraries in Ontario and the development of library networks and services more closely linked to public needs, has adopted a cataloguing, classification and filing standard which is gaining wide acceptance among libraries all over the province. A number of experiments are being conducted such as the cataloguing data-sharing scheme in the Lake Ontario region. The North Central, Algonquin and Northeastern regions are laying the groundwork for future coordination of collections and standardization with the development of a tri-regional automated union catalogue. A number of regions have embarked on the centralized processing of special materials such as films, recordings, French books, foreign language books, etc. The Metropolitan Toronto Library Board maintains a union location file for all library systems in its region including location information for all 22 Toronto Public Library branches, and the Hamilton Public Library offers a book display for selection and a card set service. Several commercial firms offer complete acquisition and processing programmes supported by large warehouse stocks, selected lists, core collections, etc. Other companies offer professional cataloguing only or an integrated acquisitions, cataloguing, billing and accounting system. Most commercial processing is offered below actual cost in order to ensure library patronage of the wholesale book purchasing service.

There are also more dramatic developments on the horizon such as the possibility of public library access to a large automated cataloguing data bank or the sharing of a similar facility with Ontario's university or college libraries. Automated file access has already been opened to the Mississauga, North York and Metropolitan Toronto public libraries.

These and other developments show a healthy trend toward coordination on a province-wide scale rather than toward a proliferation of uncoordinated regional level processing centres. In a halting, trial and error way all public libraries may be on the way, ten years later, to fulfilling the "single processing centre" recommendation contained in the St. John report.

II THE BENEFITS OF CENTRALIZED PROCESSING EXAMINED

It is our understanding that the majority of senior staff and board members in the region are already familiar with most of the arguments for and against centralized processing and that a good deal of discussion on the question has already taken place. In addition the experience of other regional boards, the existence of commercial processors and the cataloguing and bibliographic data sharing projects being developed among university libraries are indication enough of the viability of the idea. The assumption in this study is that centralized processing, in the long term, will yield more benefits than disadvantages to library authorities and public. There is ample documentation available in library literature to bear out the correctness of this proposition.

However it will be useful to examine this proposition in general before testing its validity to the libraries of the South Central Region and to specify the main arguments within the context of this study.

1. Staff Time and Space Can be Saved

A significant saving of staff time can be realized depending of course on the amount of the library materials budget committed to an outside agency.

The major saving of staff time will result from less use of a cataloguer's time, less time spent in selecting material, the reduction of the typing, revision or editing of catalogue cards, fewer book shipments to unpack and check, fewer invoices to pay and less jacketing, labelling, etc. Against this saving will be more time spent on ordering through a centre and on new routines in general.

Medium and large libraries will need to retain some staff and space for the continued processing of gifts, some government documents, non-print material, some reference materials such as standing orders, items requiring urgent processing, etc. Some of this residual, in-house processing may require the attention of a professional librarian. Small libraries will need to retain only a part-time technician or clerical assistant. In some cases the chief librarian spends considerable time selecting, cataloguing or supervising the processing operation. Any time saved here would be of considerable value.

There is no doubt that space can be saved by turning over to a centre many of the work routines normally performed in the library. Storage space for volumes awaiting processing can be greatly reduced. If staff is reduced, desk and counter space is saved.

Space devoted to cataloguing and bibliographic tools can be reduced in larger libraries. Authority files, order files and card catalogues used in processing will be smaller. Most equipment such as duplicators,

typewriters, photocopiers, etc. can be used elsewhere or disposed of. Since postal parcels are much fewer and shipments from the centre are received regularly and can be disposed of quicker the receiving areas are less cluttered and may be smaller.

The question then arises as to the use which can be made of staff time or space released. Each library will have a different answer. Ideally more staff time would be devoted to public service or perhaps there are jobs to be performed which have been neglected. The use elsewhere of a trained cataloguer might prove to be difficult; the retraining of a clerical assistant for other work would not be difficult. Space freed from processing may not be suitable for other uses although it is a rare library which cannot make some good use of extra space for expansion or better service.

2. Processing Time Can Be Reduced

This is a generally cited advantage which must be thoroughly checked. Large volume processing centres can make use of assembly line techniques and new technology for speed and accuracy. Mechanical duplicators can produce high quality catalogue cards much faster than a typist. Trained cataloguers concentrating on original cataloguing and classification or perhaps specializing in a subject area or the coordination of subject headings can produce data faster than a general cataloguer who must make all decisions on all acquisitions. The processing centre may have access to MARC tapes, an LC proof slip file or other sources of pre-catalogued data, thus reducing the original decisions to be made on each acquisition. The pro forma receipt of a majority of all publications soon after or before publication data allows the centre to begin processing before multiple orders are received; generally a much quicker process than is possible in an individual library which cannot arrange to receive sample copies of new publications. Providing a library participant on receipt of the finished product does not negate any possible advantage by checking up on the cataloguing and classification work performed by the centre, the average per volume time for actual processing at an efficient centre ordering multiple copies is less than the time that would be required by any one library processing at the same standard.

However the centre, like the individual library, is dependent on the supplier to deliver efficiently. The greatest time lapse from the completion of the selection procedure to the placing of a new acquisition on the shelf occurs usually after the order has been sent to the supplier. It is true that some publishers may fill orders destined for large processing centres before those going to small libraries but neither Midwestern, Hamilton or Niagara could offer proof of this. In addition the use of a centre introduces extra shipping time. The finished product must be delivered from the centre to the library.

3. A High and Uniform Standard of Cataloguing, Classification and Finishing is Assured

Although in our view standardization of subject headings and entries is most important for a union card file or for any efficient inter-library loan scheme, full standardization of all cataloguing conventions is essential for the most efficient operation of an automated bibliographic data bank and the production of a printed book catalogue. Certainly if full standardization will eventually smooth the way toward an inter-regional, provincial or national bibliographic data bank and wider inter-library lending or the sharing of cataloguing information, then libraries have a responsibility to their users to conform to such a standard.

Although the creation of a union catalogue does not depend on the use of a processing centre, the standardization which results from many libraries using one source for cataloguing data facilitates and stimulates the development of union lists as a by-product.

Processing centres must produce cataloguing at the standard required by its largest customers. This means that the smaller libraries must accept unnecessary detail, full class numbers and an analysis of subject content beyond their needs. This high standard, although unnecessary for them, should not be a deterrent to the use of a centre, however. Without any alteration or review of the product small libraries can ignore long classification numbers and detailed data on catalogue cards if they wish. The larger libraries will find full cataloguing details useful. In any case unanimous agreement to accept the standards and conventions used by the centre is a necessary prerequisite to participation in it.

If the standards accepted differ in important ways from current practice, then the library may be faced with retroactive changes to class numbers, entry, or subject headings. Even the acceptance of the book pocket in a different location can be a serious nuisance. In our experience subject heading differences can lead to serious disruption in the use of the card file. Long class numbers affect only shelving routines and serious differences in main entries are not numerous. Lengthy or detailed descriptive cataloguing can be ignored and differences in labelling and pasting don't affect the public, tend to disappear in time and in any case can be rectified fairly cheaply.

The change-over from Sears to Library of Congress subject headings is expensive to correct and, if not done, does affect the public who use the catalogue to find a group of titles on one subject; one of the major ways in which catalogues are used.

Other possible disadvantages to the acceptance of a common standard of processing may show up in local classification differences such as the treatment of biographies, the classification of Canadian literature, or the use of special subject heading and class numbers to accommodate

local interests or local history. Changes may have to be made in the existing collection and some recataloguing may have to take place. The extent of these changes and the expense of making them are factors to be weighed in the decision to use a centre. However such factors must be kept in perspective and must not be allowed to assume an importance crucial to the decision. There are inconsistencies and conflicts in all card catalogues. If the acceptance of a standard underlines them, reference and guide cards can be useful to the public and staff until adjustments can be made.

4. It is Economical For Each If a Group of Libraries Uses a Processing Centre

We have indicated how time and space might be saved. It follows from this that salary budgets may, if not reduced, be increased at a slower pace if the diversion of personnel from processing to other work delays the hiring of people to fill vacancies. Similarly the use of space released from processing may delay the need for capital to expand or to build a new library.

However there are certain specific savings which result from the use of a centre. There is a need for fewer processing supplies, less postage, fewer delivery charges and order forms, less mechanical equipment and, as a result, maintenance costs are reduced. As well the high cost of cataloguing and bibliographic tools is reduced or eliminated. These savings may be partly offset by new expenses incurred in the use of the centre such as the cost of travelling to the selection point or to the centre for meetings.

A comparison of processing costs incurred by an independent library with costs which might be incurred if a processing centre is used is difficult to make but, realizing that library boards will wish to be reasonably certain that their budgets at least show no increase through the use of a centre, we have included in our cost figures summarized later in this report all factors which can be reasonably accurately measured and which would contribute to valid comparisons.

5. Duplication of Titles is Reduced and Collections are Coordinated

Certainly if those responsible for selection of material in each library work together and everyone becomes familiar with the total collection availble in a region, the duplication of special, little-used and expensive materials can be reduced and, as a consequence, the number of different titles purchased can be increased. If a plan for the build-up of subject emphasis in individual libraries is worked out, it can be applied without the use of a processing centre; however, as in the case of the development of a union catalogue, commitment to a single processing

centre is a powerful stimulant to cooperative collection building. Efficient inter-library lending, a comprehensive union location catalogue and cooperative collection building can be important results of group selection, ordering and processing.

6. Involvement of the Participating Libraries in the Management of the Centre Contributes to the Development and Unity of the System

Participation in library-sponsored processing centres usually means an involvement in decision-making in regard to policy, techniques and routines and provides library representatives with an avenue for constructive criticism. No library may simply use the centre casually or for as long as it is noticeably advantageous. The cooperative principles of responsibility and involvement must apply. In addition the participating library and its board must be committed deeply enough to play a role in the development and use of the centre over a time span long enough to permit viable planning and budgeting.

These requirements, in being met through formal meetings and informal contacts, develop unity and understanding among the staff members of all participating libraries. This unity and understanding in turn can yield benefits for other regional services. It can stimulate the flow of new ideas.

If commercial centres are used, there can be no involvement in the running of the centre. There is no cooperative relationship or commitment to it.

7. A Processing Centre is in a Better Position to Take Advantage of New Equipment and Technology

The assumption behind this statement is not that new equipment and technology are always a good thing but simply that some testing and research into new technology are necessary and because processing centres are larger than the processing departments of any of the member libraries, they are better qualified and better equipped to run the financial risk and spend the time in such testing and research. If data processing or automated procedures are planned the system design and testing phase is expensive and can only be justified if there is collective financing.

III THE PRINCIPAL BENEFITS OF CENTRAL PROCESSING FOR THE LIBRARIES OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

In order to establish which of the foregoing benefits are of prime importance to the libraries in the region a meeting was held with the Technical Services Committee of the South Central Regional Library. The Oakville, Burlington, Hamilton, Wentworth County, Brantford and Dundas public libraries were represented at the meeting.

The discussion distilled out five benefits of prime importance. These were then placed in order of priority as follows:

1 Standardization

2 Cost Benefits

3 Shorter Processing Time

4 Space Saving

5 Staff Time Saving

It was decided to find out if these benefits would be valid for the test libraries and hence, by implication, of benefit to all libraries in the region if any one of the alternative processing centres, Midwestern, Niagara or Hamilton, were used.

In order to measure cost benefits and processing times and make a comparison between the 3 test libraries as well as between the 3 processing centre alternatives, the methods developed by Mr. Eric Bow, Co-ordinator of Technical Services of the Provincial Library Service, Ministry of Colleges and Universities were somewhat modified and adopted by this study.

In 1972 the P.L.S. issued a report entitled Book Processing in the Public Libraries of Ontario. The prime objectives of this report were: (1) to examine the amount of standardization existing in Ontario, (2) to gather information on the average time it takes to place a book on the shelves, and (3) to find out the costs of processing printed material using the same factors for all libraries surveyed.

This was the first comprehensive province-wide survey of the technical services of public libraries ever produced in Ontario. The methods used to collect and analyse the data received the approval of the Technical Services Committee set up by the directors of the 14 regional libraries (DORLS) and the report has since been accepted as a sound inventory of technical services practice and standards.

With the permission of the Director of the Provincial Library Service, Mr. William Roedde, Mr. Bow assisted this study by adapting the methods

used in his report to collect and analyse data from the Dundas, Milton and Oakville libraries. A somewhat simplified version of the original questionnaire was used and a work diary was requested from each staff member responsible for any aspect of book processing from selection to the shelving of the finished product. For full details of the method used please refer to the Appendix of Book Processing in the Public Libraries of Ontario.

1. Standardization

In putting this first the group wished to emphasize that the time had come when all regional groupings of libraries in Ontario as well as in Canada should work toward the acceptance without alteration or review of one cataloguing standard so that bibliographic data, information about collections and the location of material could be organized efficiently in Ontario and in Canada.

In 1970 the Directors of Ontario's Regional Library Systems (DORLS) developed and adopted minimum standards for cataloguing, classification and filing. The DORLS standards are seen as a basic requirement for any processing centre in Ontario because they were developed to facilitate future access to any automated data base using a MARC format.

These standards (see Appendix) are being met by the Midwestern and Niagara processing centres. The Hamilton Public Library meets or exceeds the standards except for a few local classification variations and the use of Cutter numbers.

Since the acceptance of such standards is considered to be desirable for all public libraries in Ontario and is seen in SCRLS as the most important advantage which would result from the use of a centre, it follows that all libraries in the region should be prepared to adjust their cataloguing practices to meet the DORLS standards.

As one can see from Table A there are only a few variations among the test libraries. The most serious differences occur in Milton and Oakville which use Sears subject headings rather than Library of Congress and classify all biographies in 92 or 920 rather than 920 for collective biographies, B for individual biographies or with the subject when a single clear subject orientation is present. All other deviations can be easily corrected or ignored.

In our view it would be important for Milton and Oakville to begin immediately to adopt Library of Congress subject headings and for any other libraries in the region using non-conforming subject headings to do so if for no other reason than to prepare for the possibility of participation in a provincial bibliographic centre.

Conforming to the DORLS standards for the classification of biographies

is not as urgent. If the standards are accepted, reclassification can be completed over a long period and in the meantime all biographies, whether bearing a 920 or B classification, may be shelved alphabetically. by author and subject classified biographies shelved with the subject. Guide cards and shelf signs can be used to assist the library patron.

It is recommended that all libraries in the region accept the DORLS cataloguing standards and that libraries seriously divergent from the standards receive advice and assistance from the SCRLS Technical Services Committee and the regional staff.

We do not at this time advocate direct financial aid from the regional board to the libraries who must retroactively adjust their collections or catalogues to meet new standards but assistance in some form should be considered as soon as all libraries agree to standardization and as soon as the extent and cost of the necessary adjustments are known. This matter needs detailed study by the SCRLS Technical Services Committee.

It is recommended that the SCRLS Technical Services Committee initiate a study of the cataloguing and classification adjustments necessary in all libraries in the region in order to meet the DORLS cataloguing standards and recommend to the regional board the level of financial assistance needed to assist individual libraries to meet them.

TABLE A Principal Variants from DORLS Standards in the Test Libraries

DORLS Standard	Dundas	Milton	Oakville
Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latest Edition of Dewey (18th)	Yes	No (17)	Yes
Full Class Number	Yes	Not Always	Not Always
Library of Congress Subject Headings	Yes	Sears	Sears + Modified L.C.
Library of Parliament French Headings	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

DORLS Standard	Dundas	Milton	Oakville
CLA Headings for Canadian Subjects	Yes	No	Yes
Pre-Cataloguing Data Accepted Without Change	No	No	No
First Three Letters of Author or Biographer	Yes	No (2)	No (2)
819 for Canadian Lit.	Yes	Yes	Yes
"B" or "920" or with Subject for all Biographies	Yes	No (92)	No (920)

The methods used to finish a book - position of book card pocket, labels, stamps, details on the book card, etc. - although not included in the DORLS standards are important to some libraries and can affect the speed at which books are checked out and in and shelved. The most important of these considerations is the pasting of the book card pocket in the front or back of the book. Some libraries will have to accept a certain amount of inconvenience in order to adjust to the format of the finished book turned out by the processing centre.

2. Cost Benefits

Costs were seen as a first consideration of library boards looking for ways and means to direct a greater share of the annual budget to public service. Although a negligible cost advantage might be acceptable to most boards if the other advantages of central processing could be demonstrated convincingly, the boards of the smaller library jurisdictions might reject the use of a centre for cost reasons only.

In order to compare the costs of processing the operation was divided into 5 sequences: selection, acquisition, cataloguing, finishing and administration (which also includes filing and other miscellaneous tasks). Each sequence included the following costs:

a. Selection - labour
cost of selection tools

b. Acquisition - labour
postage and shipping
floor space allotted

b.		- maintenance share equipment share bibliographic tools share cost of supplier if used supplies
c.	Cataloguing	- labour bibliographic tools floor space allotted maintenance share
d.	Finishing	- labour supplier equipment share floor space share maintenance share
e.	Administration	- labour

The total cost per volume and per title was worked out for the test libraries. This gave us a picture of present costs.

Each of the above factors was then applied to the hypothetical situation which would pertain if either Dundas, Milton or Oakville were using the existing processing centres of Niagara or Midwestern during the same period or the proposed operation of a centre by the Hamilton Public Library.

There are several reasons why the figures in Table B cannot be taken as completely accurate. It is virtually impossible to calculate and include the cost of every task or motion pertaining to all phases of book processing. In addition the figures used reflect costs pertaining in October 1974 while the numbers of books and titles processed were taken from 1973 statistics. Estimates of costs for the hypothetical use of Midwestern, Niagara or H.P.L. could be arrived at in different ways. We have assumed that most of the savings would be realized by a reduction in labour spent on cataloguing, finishing and administration. The savings expected in selecting from a display all current needs every two weeks would be somewhat offset by increased travel costs visiting Kitchener, Hamilton or St. Catharines.

It should be noted also that we have considered in our costing the gain or loss of discounts resulting from a change of supplier, a share of maintenance costs, equipment costs and floor space allotted to acquisitions, cataloguing and finishing. Some of these amounts would not necessarily appear as expenditures in the library's financial statement but we felt that these variables should be included so that the final comparative figures would be more credible.

TABLE B: Comparison of Processing Costs of the Test Libraries with Estimates of Costs If Using a Processing Centre

	Dundas		Milton		Oakville	
	$ 1 Vol.	$ 1 Title	$ 1 Vol.	$ 1 Title	$ 1 Vol.	$ 1 Title
Selection	1.63	1.70	1.44	1.44	0.97	2.89
Acquisition	2.34	2.45	0.59	0.59	0.76	5.25
Cataloguing	0.92	0.96	0.43	0.43	0.47	1.39
Finishing	1.77	1.85	1.13	1.13	1.56	4.62
Miscellaneous (incl. admin)	0.91	0.96	0.91	0.91	0.29	0.87
Total Cost of Processing	7.56	7.93	4.49	4.49	4.06	12.00
Estimated Cost						
Using MRLS	5.14	5.40	5.80	5.80	3.93	11.63
Using NRLS	4.70	4.93	5.31	5.31	*3.47	*10.25
Using H.P.L.						
Prop. I -	5.33	5.60	5.93	5.93	4.08	12.07
Prop. II -	6.18	6.49	6.79	6.79	4.89	14.14

Notes on Cost Figures:

a. Dundas - acquisition costs are high because of the extra charges paid to BPAL and the lower discounts passed on by them. Selection costs are high because of the part played in this activity by the chief librarian. Finishing costs are high because of higher labour and maintenance costs for this activity.

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* Government documents are now included in the NRLS book display. If this selection is broad enough to supply the cataloguing needs of Oakville for this kind of material, the cost of using NRLS sited above will be reduced further.

b. Milton - selection costs are high because of the part played in this activity by the chief librarian; otherwise the lower costs in Milton reflect a lack of trained personnel, the purchase of fewer expensive books, and simplified cataloguing procedures.

c. Oakville - selection costs are lower because more titles are selected per hour of reviewing, etc. Cataloguing and finishing costs are high per title but low per volume because of the number of copies ordered. Oakville costs per volume are the lowest, thus reflecting an economy of scale. However the acquisition costs per title are the highest because more specialized books are ordered requiring more expediting with a larger number of suppliers.

Conclusions on Processing Costs

It appears that Dundas would benefit financially the most from using any of the processing centre alternatives. The use of the NRLS centre would be the most economical.

Milton would not gain financially at the moment. However it should be stressed that the figures were gathered before the move to the new building was made. Relative costs will undoubtedly rise as the collection becomes more sophisticated and more staff is added. As more branches are added to the Milton library system acquisition and cataloguing costs per title will climb, thus narrowing or crossing the cost gap between independent processing and the use of a centre. It would be wise to rework the cost figures for Milton during or at the end of 1975.

Oakville stands to gain a little by using the MRLS centre and to gain more by using NRLS.

The two Hamilton proposals would be, in all cases, the most expensive for the three test libraries.

3. Shorter Processing Time

This benefit is not seen as being of crucial importance unless books in heavy demand were seriously delayed by the use of a centre. Processing centres are, of course, aware of the importance of heavy demand titles. Early display for selection, priority processing and shipping can be offered to give some priority to such material.

The longest delay between the date an item is selected and the date it is available for public use is usually the "on order" period. Although no proof is available, we suspect that individual libraries especially

small ones may experience a longer delay than large processing centres which place bulk orders and can exert more pressure on a supplier to deliver efficiently. Be that as it may, waiting for a publication to arrive is largely beyond the control of an individual library. The actual time an item takes to be unpacked, checked, catalogued, finished and shelved is controllable and this time period can be compared between processing centre and library, keeping in mind that the processing centre has an extra step at the end of the sequence of operations - the time taken to ship the finished batch to a library or to a regional headquarters and then to a library.

In order to find out the average time taken by each library to process a book from ordering to shelving, a representative list of 40 adult and children's books was selected from the current accessions of Milton, the smallest library, and checked in Dundas and Oakville and then in Midwestern, Niagara and Hamilton Public. The dates the book was ordered, received and finished were tabulated if available. Dundas, Milton, Midwestern and Niagara were able to give us exact dates. Oakville could only give the dates by month, and Hamilton, with considerable difficulty, gave accurate dates for about half the titles found.

Since most titles are ordered by the processing centres every two weeks but processing is begun on the display titles as soon as the order is placed, it would not be valid to compare processing centre dates as given with library dates. However from the point of view of the three test libraries the total time lapse from ordering a book to placing it on the shelf ready for use is the important factor and can be compared with the total time lapse from date of ordering in the processing centre to the date it is sent to a participating library, plus three days for delivery to and handling at the library destination. For the purposes of the exercise, holidays and weekends have been included in the calculations and no distinction has been made between the 34 adult and 6 juvenile titles on the list of 40. Hamilton Public Library was included as a processing centre even though at the moment its technical services department serves only its own main library and branches.

As one can see from Table C, Niagara provided the fastest average service; Midwestern was second; Milton, Oakville, Dundas and Hamilton were third, fourth, fifth and sixth respectively.

Among the three test libraries Dundas experiences the longest "on order" delays. Milton receives delivery of its orders before the others. Hamilton, probably because of its use of "on approval" orders, was second fastest.

The significant results of the processing time checks are that the Midwestern and Niagara centres supplied the books faster on the average and even though Oakville usually placed its order before Dundas, Milton or Hamilton, and occasionally before the processing centres, this did not assure an earlier finished date. It would seem from this matching

of processing times that the test libraries can speed their delivery of books to the public through the use of first, Niagara and second, Midwestern.

TABLE C Comparisons of Processing Times Between the Processing Centres and the Test Libraries

	Dundas	Milton	Oakville	Midwestern	Niagara	Hamilton
No. of titles finished	22	20	26	32	29	16
Total time lapse in days (from ordering to finishing)	3,243	1,739	3,314	2,541	1,936	2,946
Average time lapse in days per title	147.4	87.0	127.5	79.4	66.8	184.1
No. of titles ordered first	3	2	16	5	8	5
Average "on order" time lapse in days	117.7	66.1	96.9	N.A.	N.A.	73.2

4. Space Saving

Although most libraries can usefully occupy extra space, this benefit would be of special importance if any space saved from using a processing centre could be converted to public service use.

The amount of space which might be saved in any one participating library depends on two main factors:

i The amount of the library book budget committed to the centre.

In all cases we are assuming that a minimum of 70% of the budget can be committed after an initial adjustment period. The remaining 30% may be further reduced but some processing will always be needed to handle gifts, rare items, some government documents, a few reference items, and non-print material.

ii The suitability for other purposes of the space presently used and its position in the library building.

Among the test libraries Milton has the most space (1800 square feet)

devoted to processing as a proportion of the gross area of the building and its position in relation to the public service areas is such that a public use might be made of part or all of it in the future. However, having moved to the new building only in October 1974, there is as yet ample space available for all functions. However, the addition of branches and the expansion of the main collection could change this situation.

The present Dundas library processing area on the lower floor of the building, although crowded, still serves the needs of the staff efficiently. About 2,500 square feet are devoted to this purpose. All adult and children's books are ordered, received, catalogued and finished in the area. Phonodiscs and other A-V materials, while catalogued in the A-V department, are finished in the processing area. Any space saved through the use of a central processing agency could be converted most easily to other administrative uses rather than to public service; although a replanning of the lower floor might make possible the relocation of the reference service there if the board room and one office could be moved to the present technical services area.

The Oakville library processing area is apparently overcrowded and if branches are added or there is an expansion of the main library, there will be an urgent need of more space for receiving, shipping, and residual acquisition, cataloguing and finishing operations even if a portion of the book budget is placed with an outside processing centre. If, however, a surplus of space did occur other administrative uses could be found for it.

Since most libraries are expanding services to meet the needs of more people as well as adding new services to the handicapped, increasing the non-print content of the collection, adding more technical books, promoting more student use, more community activities etc., there is always pressure for more space. The use of an outside centre for processing does relieve, albeit temporarily, crowded conditions in the acquisitions, storage and cataloguing areas. In our experience and after checking with a number of libraries at present using processing centres, we would estimate that a minimum of 40% of the processing space can be freed for other purposes if 70% of the book budget is spent through a processing centre. In Oakville 2,250 square feet would be made available. In Dundas 998 square feet would be made available. In Milton 720 square feet would be made available.

5. Staff Time Saving

The group felt that this benefit is less important than a saving of space because of the difficulty in actually reducing staff. It was seen as unlikely that the total staff would actually be reduced in number by the use of a centre but that a shift in duties would be the more probable result. Although if staff is expanding, as it is in most libraries in SCRLS, the use of ex-processing staff for other purposes can temporarily

arrest this expansion. We feel that this is most likely to be the case in Oakville and other libraries of similar size or larger.

The use of a processing centre will require a change in routines. Selection from a comprehensive display is more efficient and undoubtedly faster per title. On the one hand there is less handling of small orders, small packages, invoices and accounts. On the other hand there are new forms to fill out, lists to be checked, or order files to maintain. The principal savings of staff time seem to occur in the use of trained cataloguers. In our interviews with libraries using processing centres all admitted that staff time was saved but few could quantify the amount. The smaller libraries found that the chief librarian was relieved totally of processing duties. Some said that although the library has grown, they have not needed to hire a cataloguer. One library transferred their assistant cataloguer, another has been able to carry on with only part-time staff in processing.

It is not possible to predict the savings in staff time with any certainty in any of the test libraries. So much depends on the suitability of processing staff for other jobs; but, to generalize, the clerical staff will continue to be needed to handle the routine work associated with outside processing while the amount of professional or senior staff content in the operation will be reduced.

Since only one full-time trained staff member is used in the processing operation, in the Dundas Public Library staff time saved could easily be applied to public or other support service or used to proceed with work now unavoidably neglected.

At the moment about 50% of the book budget is being spent with a commercial firm (BPAL). According to the staff, 75% of the book budget could be switched to any suitable outside processing centre chosen by the region as a whole. The remaining 25% would be reserved for items needed on short notice, standing orders, local history, special reference works and non-print material. In our estimation the full time of at least one clerical staff member could be saved in this way, providing the output of the centre used is accepted without revision.

For some time to come, the Milton Public Library will be deficient in resources and it will be very important to be able to draw on other collections in the region by means of inter-library loans and an efficient delivery service. In addition, if greater funds are to be made available to enlarge a collection too small for the new population of 22,000, a central processing service either inside or outside the region would be desirable in order to quicken the rate of growth of the collection, to relieve the present staff, including the Chief Librarian, of additional ordering and cataloguing and, above all, to avoid the need to hire extra staff.

The Oakville Public Library has the largest technical service operation of the three and the most specialized collection. The department

employs three full time staff members, two of which are trained librarians. Five other staff contribute a total of 78 hours of work to the operation. Because of Oakville's status as a deposit library there is a strong government documents collection. In our estimation, if an outside centre is used, the full time of one librarian could be saved and at least half the time of one clerical assistant.

TABLE D Book Collection and Expenditure Statistics of the Test Libraries, 1973

	1973 Population Served	Vols. Added	Titles Added	Vols./ Title Added	Book Collection	Books Per Cap.	Expenditure	Exp. Per Cap.	Expenditure on Books	Per Cap.
Dundas	18,098	3,967	3,780	1.1	41,694	2.3	$182,467.00	10.08	$22,956.00	$1.27
Milton	15,667*	2,546	2,546	1.0	23,115	1.5	$ 48,772.00	3.11	$10,976.00	$0.70
Oakville	62,890	18,413	6,292	2.9	137,330	2.2	$685,420.00	10.90	$73,934.00	$1.18

* Changes in municipal boundaries effective January 1, 1974 have increased Milton's population to over 22,000. The 1973 population is used here for comparative purposes.

IV THE PROCESSING ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

In describing the operation of the Niagara and Midwestern processing centres and the proposal of the Hamilton Public Library only details which would have a bearing on libraries in the South Central Region are included so that comparisons can be made which will be relevant to the study.

There are, of course, conditions to be met by libraries participating and there are a few ground rules which pertain to all three. These can be summarized as follows:

a. Both operating processing centres will work only with and through the SCRLS organization and not directly with an individual library. It is not clear if H.P.L. is prepared to deal with individual libraries or only a group.

b. No group of libraries should cooperate in a centralized processing scheme if the only reasons for doing so are to save money and processing time. The advantages are cumulative and not immediately apparent. Participation means willingness to change and implies inter-dependence and unity.

c. It takes about six months to switch from independent processing to the use of a centre. The library must be committed to a trial period of 6 months to 1 year and to spending a reasonable proportion of its book budget. If SCRLS decides to participate, the initiation period may require some financial support from the regional budget.

d. Experimentation, research planning and study are required to develop new routines or to make use of new technology. These ongoing development costs must be shared between the centre, the regional boards and all participating boards. If computer applications are involved, development and start-up costs may be too heavy for the centre alone to sustain. Government grants, available through the Ontario Provincial Library Council for special development projects, can be used to cover part of these heavy costs.

e. The centres would expect each participating library to order a fair proportion of all types of books through the centre: fiction, non-fiction, reference and juvenile. Costs and routines are based on the receipt of a cross-section of current public library acquisitions with a reasonable number of retrospective titles.

f. Each centre has or will have standards and routines worked out by representatives of the libraries concerned as best

for all. Those joining the centre are expected to conform to these standards and routines and to assist in their improvement through group consultation and workshops. None of the policies and procedures are fixed. They are dynamic and subject to change.

1. The Midwestern Regional Library Centre

Begun in 1967 as a service of the regional board to the public libraries of the Midwestern Region, the centre now serves all 7 major libraries in its region and 7 out of the 16 small libraries. Early in the development of the service the decision was taken to offer a processing service to public libraries outside the region. The reason for this was a desire to maintain or decrease unit costs by increasing production. In turn the increase in production above a basic level has enabled the centre to take full advantage of more sophisticated equipment, develop computer application as well as a system of conveyors to improve the flow of books through the processes. The production line, as it is now organized, is capable of accepting a much larger volume of orders and according to the Director would not be a viable operation if only MRLS libraries participated.

By October 1973 there were 27 libraries outside the Midwestern Region which were regular users of the centre including 20 from the Central Ontario Regional Library System. About 50% of the current uses of the centre is by libraries outside the region. In 1973 about 48% of adult books and 31% of the children's books were purchased by outside libraries. The non-regional use has grown with the addition of libraries from the Georgian Bay Region, more intense use by libraries in Central Ontario, and because the number of books added to library collections has increased.

Basic to the operation of the centre is the use of a display of current publications from which a selection for purchase is made by the participating library. The adult display, made up of the output from 46 Canadian publishers and agents (Vendors) is changed every two weeks. The display of children's titles is changed every four weeks.

Representatives of the libraries have the option to visit Kitchener, select from the display and use the bibliographic tools available or select from a list of the publications on display sent to each participant at the beginning of the display period. On the average, eight copies of each title are ordered from the display. Publications not included in the display but requested by individual libraries are listed and all libraries are given an opportunity to add their order if they wish to do so. About four copies of each title are ordered from this request list. In addition, from time to time and with the assistance of participating libraries, extra selection lists of books on a specific subject are issued to act as an aid in collection building. About 40,000 titles have been selected by participating

libraries over the past three years. This accumulation in the form of a book catalogue can be used by libraries wishing to acquire quickly a core collection for a new branch although this use of the accumulated titles has occurred only twice.

Orders generated by the various selection methods are consolidated and placed mostly with Canadian vendors. Cataloguing procedures for most of the display items are begun as soon as, or in a few cases, before the orders for them are placed and card sets are available in many cases by the time the book has arrived from the publisher. Cataloguing data are obtained from L.C. proof slips, from the usual bibliographic tools and access to the cataloguing data bank at the University of Toronto Library. This is done by requesting the information needed by submission of L.C. and/or ISBN numbers. The data are returned on 3 x 5 cards which are used as work cards at the centre. About 55% of the data requested in this way are returned within the two-week display period and about 75% of the data are received within three months after which the requests are cancelled.

The items marked for purchase on the request or special lists are catalogued and processed as soon as they arrive at the centre. The processes used at the centre need not be described here. They are efficient and geared to keeping costs low and participating libraries satisfied. The finished product is delivered directly to libraries in the region three times a week and to the regional headquarters of libraries in the Central Ontario Region once a week. Billing for the cost of the book plus charges for processing is done once a month. The further utilization of data processing equipment in the billing process will in the future give each participating library the amount owing, the amount committed and other accounting information. As an important spin-off of the accounting procedures, a monthly acquisition list is arranged by author, title and shelf order giving library locations for each title. This list called the adult book index, is in effect, a union book catalogue, accumulated quarterly and yearly.

Financially the centre is only viable if, as has been said, libraries outside Midwestern continue to use the centre. All revenue in excess of expenses is used for further development, workshops, meetings and to offset increasing costs. None of the profit, if any, is used for other regional programmes. However, participating libraries in the region do receive a 50 cents subsidy for each copy of a book purchased through the centre to be applied to their book budgets. At present MRLS loses 30 cents on each book processed.

Charges for the processing service to libraries outside the region are as follows:

$1.50 for full processing of the 1st copy of a hard cover book, adult or children's.

$1.30 for each additional copy of a title if ordered at the same time as the first.

$0.75 for each paperback book listed at $2.95 or less.

$0.25 is added to the cost of each volume of a multi-volume set (i.e. encyclopaedias).

In addition the cost of the book is billed to the customer minus a discount which averages 28%. The centre receives an average 40% discount from the participating vendors.

Transportation of the finished product is paid for by MRLS board to the participating library within the Midwestern Region. Transportation to the headquarters of the Central Ontario Regional Library and individual libraries in other regions is borne by the receiving library. If South Central libraries used Midwestern, we can assume that transportation costs to SCRLS headquarters would be paid by SCRLS and ongoing transportation to the individual library would be via the regular SCRLS delivery vehicle.

The Director feels that the total book budgets of all libraries in South Central with the possible exception of Hamilton could be routed through the Midwestern centre without putting undue stress on the system. Growth in output has been about 20% per year. The rate in the first six months of 1974 has been 35%.

Midwestern has already developed automated systems to produce orders to vendors, maintain purchasing records and to bill libraries. In addition the regional headquarters now has on line access to the University of Toronto's Catalogue Support System.

In June 1974 the MRLS board received a report from a systems analyst recommending the further development of automated techniques. One aspect of the proposed development is to reduce the reliance of participating libraries on the display selection method by offering by computer print-out up-to-date trade catalogue information to supplement the regular bi-weekly lists of new titles. The claim is made that librarians will be able to select new titles from a wider variety and with enough information from the trade catalogue to reduce or eliminate their need to view the display at MRLS headquarters. However publishers trade catalogues are never critical nor do they contain reliable information on the quality of the binding, the illustrations or the writing. Although the technique proposed will increase the range of titles and supply more information it cannot act as a substitute for browsing through the books themselves. There will be a gain in efficiency but there may be a loss of in-person critical evaluation of new book production. In addition there will remain in any case the necessity to travel to the regional centre for workshops, seminar and policy meetings.

2. The Processing Centre Operated by the Niagara Regional Library System

Acting on a consultant's report which recommended in 1970 that a processing centre be established, the regional board in 1971 leased a building suitable for its purposes and established a centre in which all libraries in the region were encouraged to cooperate and participate. Originally 5,600 square feet were devoted to the processing operation; in the first phase of an expansion programme the space was increased to 8,000 square feet and another 5,500 square feet is available if needed in the future.

The present output of processed books stands at 60,000 volumes representing 13,000 titles. This represents from 70-80% of the total book budgets of the participating libraries. All libraries in the Niagara Region participate to some degree in the processing centre plus the libraries of the secondary schools of Lincoln County. Dunville spends only 45-50% of its book budget through the centre, the lowest financial participation. Most libraries spend in excess of 75% with Niagara-on-the-Lake spending 95%.

The Niagara centre is relatively new and has experienced some organizational difficulties; as the Director says in his annual report, "The teething troubles are behind us; the years of growth and development are ahead".* In 1972 64,709 volumes were ordered by member libraries; in 1973 this dropped to 32,462. "This did not reflect any disenchantment on the libraries' part with the Centre's services, but was simply a stark reflection of their inability to pay any more in 1973."* In 1972 48,821 volumes were shipped out, in 1973 55,842; which indicates an increased production and a catching up on a backlog of orders placed in 1972.

Like Midwestern the Niagara centre bases its operation on the display-purchase method of selection. Each display of adult books lasts for two weeks. The children's books on the display are changed every four weeks. 50 publishers and agents send, on a pro forma invoice, copies of their current publications. Occasionally special displays of publishers' remainders are arranged and, since June 1974, important government documents are also available for selection. A duplicate display is sent to Simcoe for the convenience of the libraries in the area of former Haldimand and Norfolk Counties. Requests for titles not on the displays are generated by the libraries and offered for selection to all other libraries.

An author list of display and request titles is sent to all participating libraries from which selections are made.

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* Niagara Regional Library System. 1973 Annual Report.

Twice a year the region sponsors a meeting between the libraries and the publishers at which the up-coming publishing programme is discussed and highlights are announced. This enables libraries and the centre to be alerted to the books which are likely to be in heavy demand so that orders can be placed immediately.

Cataloguing according to the DORLS standards is begun while the books are on display. Request orders and special orders are not catalogued until the book arrives in the centre. Cataloguing copy is obtained from L.C. proof slips and other bibliographic aids as well as by accessing the machine readable file of data at the University of Toronto library's Cataloguing Support System. About 10% of the cataloguing data needed is obtained from this source at the moment. The expectation is that this proportion will rise sharply with the development of an on line facility. Further automated processes are under discussion which, it is hoped, will provide more cataloguing data faster and provide the capability for the production of a computer-produced book catalogue. However, at the moment, the development of automated procedures will require a higher level of production, more library participation and a further commitment of time and development funds from within and from without the region.

Niagara is able to accommodate batch orders for collection building or establishing new collections.

The Director has stated that he would welcome the participation of libraries from outside Niagara preferably through the regional headquarters as a group. However a commitment for a minimum of 20,000 acquisition for at least one year would be required. Since there is no participation from outside the region, many of the conditions under which South Central libraries would participate are negotiable.

Billing is included with each shipment of books and the participating libraries settle their accounts once a month.

Libraries in the region are charged the fully discounted price for the book plus $1.00 for full processing. It is admitted that the centre is subsidized from the regional budget at a rate of 50 cents per volume. There is a 10 cents charge for all items purchased but not processed. These are mostly paperbacks, government documents and pamphlets.

It is planned to charge libraries outside the region a flat $1.50 for each volume processed plus the fully discounted price of the book. This makes the use of the Niagara centre cheaper than Midwestern; a fact which is reflected in the cost figures quoted elsewhere in this report.

Delivery charges from the centre to its customers are paid by region. Delivery charges to libraries outside the region would have to be paid for by the receiving library unless delivery was to the SCRLS headquarters. In this case NRLS would use its own delivery vehicle at no extra charge.

TABLE E

Book Production of the Niagara & Midwestern Processing Centres, 1971-1973

	1971		1972		1973	
	Niagara	Midwestern	Niagara	Midwestern	Niagara	Midwestern
Titles Displayed	Service Begun Sept. 1971	10,981	10,938	10,195	10,534	9,409
Titles Selected		9,404	8,887	9,200	6,821	8,854
Volumes Selected		52,231	46,034	54,624	27,639	64,786
Titles Requested		7,999	6,722	5,234	1,598	7,401
Volumes Requested		27,788	20,248	16,930	4,823	40,162
Total Titles		16,566	15,522	14,434	8,419	16,255
Total Volumes		80,742	64,709	72,380	32,462	104,948
Volumes Processed		65,719	48,821	75,998	55,842	88,729

3. Responses of Libraries Presently Using MRLS and NRLS Processing Centres

Nine libraries outside the Midwestern Region participating in the MRLS Centre and six libraries within the Niagara Region participating in the NRLS Centre were asked for their reaction to the service. Accurate factual information or statistics were not sought. It was felt that frank comments were more valuable in order to obtain an overall impression of satisfaction or otherwise. The libraries selected were in communities whose population was similar to the range served by the test libraries, that is, from 10,000 to 80,000. The chief librarian or the head of book processing were contacted and all were asked the same eight questions.

All libraries were pleased with the service provided with some reservations. None would return to doing their own ordering and processing. Participation was high and criticism was constructive.

Questions	Answers from Libraries Using MRLS	Answers from Libraries Using NRLS
What is the % of the book budget spent through the centre?	The smaller libraries spent the highest % - up to 95%. The lowest % was 45%. Some of the budget was saved for paperbacks, gov. docs., local history, juvenile replacements, standing orders. One library continued to use BPAL and one Coop.	The smallest library spent 100%. All were above 70% with most around 80%. Several will increase their participation in 1975.
Estimate time taken to receive books after ordering.	Answers varied widely, perhaps indicating a lack of accurate knowledge. The shortest time was 2 weeks, the longest was 12 weeks. The median was about 5 weeks.	Answers also varied widely from 2 to 3 weeks to 12 weeks. The median was about 6 weeks.
Is the display used and is it helpful?	4 libraries (not the smaller and not all were far away) used only the lists supplied by CORLS. 4 libraries used the display regularly. One used the display once a month for juvenile books only.	All libraries used the display regularly.
Have you saved money by using the centre?	None knew how much but all had saved money.	None knew how much but all had saved money. Two libraries thought $1.00 was too expensive for fiction processing.
Have you saved space?	Most felt thay had but were unable to measure how much space was saved.	Most felt they had but were unable to measure how much space was saved.

Questions	Answers from Libraries Using MRLS	Answers from Libraries Using NRLS
Has staff time been saved?	4 libraries could not answer. 3 said yes but could not be specific. One library has never needed any processing staff because of the use of the centre and one library said they had not noticed any saving because their staff has constantly expanded.	All libraries have saved staff. The chief librarian of one library no longer needs to catalogue. Two libraries have not needed a cataloguer. One library now uses processing staff for public service and clipping file.
What other advantages have been noticed?	- No postage or delivery charges; one parcel, one invoice. - Adult book index used by the public. - Communication with other librarians improved. - Union list used for ILL. - Cooperative collection building now possible. - Good quality cataloguing.	- Advance orders means faster deliveries. - We now know what other libraries are buying. - Budget is easier to control. - No need to carry a stock of plastic jackets. - The display is a big advantage in raising selection standards.
General Comments.	- Adjustments still must be made in cataloguing copy to conform to local usage. - Particularly good for small libraries. - Participation in advisory committee most rewarding. - More reliable than commercial processors. - Reporting on status of orders has improved. - Adult book list is becoming a union cat. for inter-library lending. - Distance from the centre not seen as a disadvantage.	- Display does not contain enough technical and advanced books. - Centre doesn't search for NCRs. - Van delivers a steady flow of books. - Pre-publication meetings with publishers are very useful. - 3%-5% of the books do not conform to our practices.

Notes on Answers to Questions

1. Greater proportion of the book budgets of the participating libraries is spent with NRLS than with MRLS. This is probably reflected in the fact that the libraries questioned in NRLS felt that they had definitely saved money on staff whereas those using MRLS were not so positive.

2. It is rather interesting that no library questioned had tried to measure the processing time. All however felt that the use of a centre produced finished books sooner. This impression is also borne out in our time lapse check.

3. It seems that NRLS needs to broaden its selection display particularly with the addition of technical and more advanced books.

4. The Proposal of the Hamilton Public Library

The technical services department of the Hamilton Public Library is housed in the same building and on the same floor as the headquarters of the South Central Regional Library. Because of this convenient location and because it is a large, well-organized and long-established processing centre serving the main library, nine branches and a mobile unit, the use of this facility by the libraries of the region is an attractive alternative. Liaison and consultation between the region and the H.P.L. operation would be simplified. Delivery of the finished product could be made directly to the libraries rather than through the regional headquarters. Procedures such as billing, the development of special selection lists and even a union catalogue could be shared by the staffs of the two organizations and, since the McMaster University technical services also is in the building, access to the UTL-MARC files and the development of EDP is a future possibility already under discussion.

There has, of course, been close cooperation between the region and H.P.L. in the past and in the area of processing H.P.L. has offered a card service paid for by the regional board to any library wishing to use it and has encouraged the use of its display of new publications as a selection tool. At the time of writing only the Burlington Public Library was receiving card sets for books ordered through BPAL. Approximately 5,000 non-fiction titles are selected from the H.P.L. display. When card sets are received Cutter numbers are erased and other changes are made to make H.P.L. convention conform to Burlington. The Dundas collection is coordinated with H.P.L. acquisitions to some extent by informal consultation and the use of the H.P.L. display of new titles prior to ordering. Up until March, 1974, card sets were ordered from H.P.L. but this service was found to be too slow. In addition, rather than accepting the cards without change, the Cutter author numbers added to the cards by H.P.L. were inked out by the Dundas staff and all sets checked with various cataloguing tools for errors. This practice, of course, reduced the advantages in staff time gained by using the H.P.L. service.

The Milton Public Library has used the H.P.L. card service particularly to obtain classification numbers but has not found the service satisfactory. 70% of the last batch of card requests were filled within three weeks of ordering but the remaining 30% had not been received after six months. M.P.L. has since discontinued the use of H.P.L. for cataloguing data.

Anxious to be of assistance to the region, the Chief Librarian of H.P.L. has offered to expand and reorganize the technical services operation to include a portion or all of the processing needs of the libraries in the region. A proposal for such an operation was developed by the Head of technical services, endorsed by the Chief Librarian and submitted to this study in September, 1974 for consideration. At this time the

process of re-organization had begun and H.P.L. is seeking access to the UTL Shared Cataloguing System through the CRT terminal employed by McMaster University technical services.

Essentially the proposal calls for the use of the display technique for selection routines and the full processing of regional orders in a separate stream of books along with the estimated 48% of the titles and volumes ordered for branches and not for the main library of the Hamilton system. This "regional stream" would be given priority in cataloguing and finishing. The present "rush" non-display multiple copy processing stream would be retained and expanded to include regional library orders.

It is estimated that processing time for displayed material would average eight weeks and rush material two weeks. This exludes the time required to obtain the item from the publisher.

The estimated cost of this service to the region would be $1.50 if an additional 20,000 volumes were added to the present H.P.L. work load. This cost is based on the assumption that all titles ordered by any outside library using the service would be purchased by one of the units of H.P.L. and therefore would not add to the cataloguing costs. If 20,000 volumes and 3,000 additional titles were added, there would be an increase in the cataloguing work-load and total costs would be greater. The estimated cost of the service per volume in this case would be $2.35.

It must be accepted that these costs are realistically calculated and acceptable to H.P.L. Only the costs of extra labour and processing materials were included in the proposal. No allowance was made for additional furniture and equipment nor for additional staff required for the billing, accounting and the courier services. We can only assume that the H.P.L. board would be prepared to subsidize these costs as a contribution to a viable regional processing operation.

We used the above processing costs of $1.50 for Proposition I and $2.35 for Proposition II in working out the comparison of processing costs of the test libraries in Table C.

The degree of title overlapping between H.P.L. and the regional libraries is important to an assessment of the proposal. In order to test this factor the recent acquisitions of Dundas, Milton and Oakville were matched with the acquisition files of H.P.L. The results were as follows.

		Titles Checked	Titles not in H.P.L.	% not found
Milton	- adult	346	46	13%
Dundas	- adult	402	85	21%
Oakville	- adult	104	26	25%
	- juvenile	214	39	18%
	- total	318	65	20%

This would indicate that of the 16,500 new titles processed by H.P.L. annually, 2,150 of the titles ordered for Milton would not be processed for Hamilton, 3,470 of the titles ordered for Dundas would not be processed for Hamilton, and 3,300 of the titles ordered for Oakville would not be processed for Hamilton. Similarly each library in the region would select titles not purchased by H.P.L. The proposal assumes in Proposition II that not more than 3,000 titles would need to be ordered especially for libraries outside H.P.L. This assumption would need further testing in all SCRLS libraries before being used as a final basis for fixing costs.

Although it is perhaps unfair to make a direct comparison between the Hamilton proposal and the operating centres of Midwestern and Niagara, nevertheless the principal benefits as designated in Chapter III must be valid for the Hamilton proposal as for the other alternatives.

In summary the H.P.L. proposal, although attractive because of the location of the centre and the opportunity it would present for close liaison and coordination with the regional headquarters, is less viable than the MRLS and NRLS centres for the following reasons:

a. Costs of using it would be higher for the participating libraries.

b. More evidence would need to be provided to indicate that the centre, when operational, would deliver books faster than the service presently provided to the H.P.L. system and the card service offered to other libraries.

c. It is not clear what costs would be if more than 20,000 volumes were ordered through H.P.L. nor what the effect on the routines, personnel and equipment would be if more than 3,000 extra titles were added to the cataloguing output as a result of regional use.

d. The use of Cutter numbers, although not serious, was mentioned by several libraries as a drawback to the use of the present

H.P.L. card service. The proposal makes no mention of any change nor is there a description of other finishing details such as the position of the book card pocket, labelling, jacketing, etc.

e. Future plans for mechanization, the development of the present computer-produced book catalogue to include regional acquisitions or the possible use and effects on service and costs of automated processes are not outlined in the proposal. Since H.P.L. has applied to use the UTL/LAS union file of bibliographic information in MARC format it would have been helpful to have had this development noted in the proposal.

5. The Location of the Book Displays in Relation to the Libraries in SCRLS

The three processing alternatives use the display technique as a selection tool. In the South Central Region some librarians have objected to the prospect of travelling to and from the location of a display of new books every two weeks. Table F indicates that the NRLS display would be on the average more distant than the MRLS or H.P.L. display. However the difference in driving time between one centre and another is not much more than one hour per round trip. Driving would be on highways well maintained in winter and summer and for the most part during the daylight hours. Many of the libraries in CORLS travel to Kitchener regularly to review the new publications and most are further from Kitchener than libraries in the South Central Region.

In our opinion distance from the display is not a factor which should weigh heavily for or against the use of one centre over another. If, however, library staff are unable or reluctant to travel every two weeks to a display, annotated lists as supplied by CORLS can be used as a substitute. If the expense of such travel is an impediment, then consideration could be given to the payment of an agreed-upon sum per mile by the regional board to all libraries making use of the displays.

TABLE F Driving Distances to Three Display Locations

	Miles to Kitchener	Miles to St. Catharines	Miles to Hamilton
Brantford	26	60	26
Burlington	41	38	10
Dundas	30	40	5
Hamilton	36	35	-
Milton	38	62	29
Oakville	51	46	21
Paris	29	62	27
Average Distance	35.9	49.0	19.7

6. Intra-Regional Catalogue Card Exchange

In July, 1973 the Lake Ontario Regional Library System began a free cooperative cataloguing scheme among the libraries in the region. The scheme had been proposed earlier by Mrs. Grace Tauger of the Kingston Public Library. It is a simple method of raising cataloguing standards among the smaller libraries which cannot afford to employ a professional cataloguer or library technician.

The largest libraries, Kingston, Belleville and Peterborough, contribute a main entry card of each current non-fiction acquisition to a union file at the regional headquarters. Requests for card sets are generated by any library in the region on a standard form. When these requests are received at regional headquarters they are searched in the union file. If cataloguing copy is found sets are completed by the regional staff and mailed to the requesting library. If no copy is found a serarch of standard bibliographic tools is made at the Kingston Public Library. If found the cataloguing data are copied and card sets completed and mailed.

At present about 18 libraries participate and about 2,500 requests for card sets are filled per year. Of the filled requests the union file supplies 50% of the cataloguing data and 50% are found in the bibliographic records of the K.P.L. or catalogued originally. A very small number remains unfilled.

This admirable example of regional cooperation is economical and simple to administer. It fulfills its purpose of raising cataloguing standards among the users at no cost to them. However, the speed at which catalogue card sets can be delivered is dependent on the speed of the processing operations of Kingston, Peterborough and Belleville. The three contributing resource libraries make no attempt to standardize their own entries among themselves; only the small independent libraries not in county systems benefit from the scheme. The Frontenac County Library does not use the service because they have trained staff on hand.

In our view the Intra-Regional Catalogue Card Exchange is suitable only to regions with small independent libraries outside county or urban systems which do not have staff members trained to catalogue to an acceptable standard. In SCRLS few libraries would benefit and those which might would probably be able to make an arrangement with one of the larger libraries to receive card sets. The free card set service offered by H.P.L. is also available. In addition we feel that the libraries in the South Central region are looking beyond such intermediate solutions to cataloguing problems to the coordination of the total acquisition problem of selection, ordering, cataloguing and finishing.

TABLE G

The Processing Centre Alternatives Summarized

	MRLS	NRLS	H.P.L.
Cataloguing standard	DORLS	DORLS	Exceeds DORLS + Cutter Nos. + local variations
Cost to library participating	2nd least expensive	Least expensive	Most expensive
Charges for processing	2nd least expensive	Least expensive	Most expensive
Processing time	2nd fastest	Fastest	Slowest
Number of Vendors represented on display	46	50	?
Is a book catalogue produced?	Yes	Planned	Yes of H.P.L. collection
Will the centre handle back orders in batches for individual libraries?	Yes with reservation	Yes	Not in proposal
Frequency of delivery of finished books	Once a week	Twice a week	Not in proposal
Is transport to headquarters outside region paid for by centre?	No	Yes	N.A.
Status of present automation	Most advanced	2nd most advanced	3rd most advanced
Future automation plans	In advanced planning stage	In the discussion stage	In the discussion stage and planned
Space for expansion	Little	Ample	Little

TABLE G (Continued)

	MRLS	NRLS	H.P.L.
Have participating libraries saved money?	Yes mostly	Yes	N.A.
Average driving distance to display from SCRLS libraries	2nd closest	Farthest away	Closest
% of participation of present libraries	2nd highest	Highest	N.A.

V BOOK PROCESSING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE LIBRARIES OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

The South Central region serves 694,000 people concentrated in a relatively small area. There is a variety of library authorities; city, town, village, County, Township and regional which operate 55 permanent service points.

It is estimated that 125,000 volumes will be purchased in 1974 by all public libraries in the region and expenditure on all library materials will be close to $1,000,000. If the accessions of H.P.L. are excluded the output of finished volumes from the other libraries will probably exceed 84,000 in 1974. This represents the maximum workload which would have to be absorbed annually by any cooperative centralized processing centre used.

1. As has been pointed out, standardization is the most important immediate goal of any group of libraries planning cooperative processing action. There are advantages of a routine, short-range character, advantages for public service and advantages for the long-range goal of one bibliographic and cataloguing data centre for Ontario or for Canada.

   Whatever is recommended for the libraries of South Central Ontario should be compatible with developments in other parts of Ontario and should bring the libraries concerned closer to the concept of complete coordination of book processing in the Province. This implies that first consideration should be given to joining an existing centre rather than creating a new one. Also implied is the approval of a centre which is being developed to be compatible with the trends toward centralized automated bibliographic data banks and international cataloguing standards.

   For this reason we reject the establishment of a home-based processing centre for SCRLS libraries as well as the short-range advantages of a catalogue card exchange scheme which sets aside the problems of coordinated selection, ordering and finishing.

2. In assessing the proposal of the Hamilton Public Library we have considered what is in the proposal as well as what is not. Since the proposal was submitted a new person has been appointed as head of the technical services department and undoubtedly there will be changes in the department as a result. Our judgement of the H.P.L. proposal should be considered in this context. A year from now our assessment might have been a different one.

However, we have no choice in this study but to measure the H.P.L. proposal against the other alternatives and in the context of the present potential of H.P.L.'s processing department.

As has been pointed out, the proposal is unclear and incomplete. Some of the details were filled in as a result of interviews but many policy and organizational decisions concerning timing, cataloguing details, frequency of delivery, book display arrangements, batch ordering of special collections and future automation have yet to be made in discussion with the potential library participants.

Another important factor is the lack of confidence which many of the libraries of the region have expressed in the technical services operation of H.P.L. This lack of confidence, although it may be completely undeserved or out of date, has resulted in little productive cooperation between the largest and the other libraries within the region in the area of technical services.

The reasons for this prevailing attitude we cannot speculate upon, nor should we. Nevertheless it exists and could be an impediment to the building of a central processing organization in which all libraries would be equal participants and in which all libraries would share in the policy decisions.

In addition the proposal suggests that the regional orders would be processed in a regional stream along with H.P.L. branch acquisitions thus setting apart the principal resource of the region - the main library of H.P.L. from full coordination with other libraries in SCRLS.

For the above reasons, from the evidence included elsewhere in this report and from opinions gathered during interviews we do not recommend that the libraries of SCRLS participate with H.P.L. in a cooperative processing programme.

However, as in the past, it is hoped that H.P.L. will continue to assist the libraries in the region in every possible way and work with them to develop their participation in any coordinated processing plan. There are two specific areas in which a cooperative effort would be of mutual benefit: a union catalogue and the sharing of a book display for selection. (See later recommendations.)

3. The choice, then, is reduced to an acceptance of the NRLS or MRLS processing centres - two similar, well-run, growing, centres,

created by leadership and participation and operated on a principle of non-profit dedication to service. There is no overwhelming reason for the choice of one over another but we believe from the evidence presented and from the responses and impressions registered during the study that the libraries of SCRLS with the exception of the Hamilton Public Library should joint the Niagara Regional Library System for their full processing needs.

It is recommended that the Board of the South Central Regional Library seek the approval of the Board of the Niagara Regional Library for the full participation of the public libraries of the region in the Niagara Regional Library Processing Centre.

It is recommended that, after agreement in principle by the two boards, a technical committee of both regional library systems develop a detailed proposal under which the participation of the libraries of SCRLS could be phased in over a period of one year beginning on June 1, 1975.

The various library boards of the region would then be encouraged to participate and the first group would select and order their books through NRLS by June 1, 1975, according to the guidelines and routines worked out by the technical committee.

4. As we have stated in Chapter IV a reasonable portion of the book budget of any one library should be committed to the centre. We feel that this should not be less than 70% after the first year of successful participation and should include a typical range of orders for adult (non-fiction and fiction), juvenile and reference titles. In statistical terms and using 1974 estimates, the NRLS centre must be capable of handling a minimum of 59,000 additional volumes by June, 1976. This is almost double the present output.

To accomplish this will require close consultation and continual liaison between SCRLS and NRLS. The importance of joint decisions affecting major policy matters, the routine operational details as well as the role of the SCRLS headquarters must be recognized.

The role of the Central Ontario Regional Library as coordinator and middleman between its libraries and the Midwestern Processing

Centre can be studied and emulated where this is appropriate but we have purposely omitted a description of the role played by CORLS because the Niagara Centre is developing differently than Midwestern and the South Central Region has a different character than Central Ontario.

5. In the matter of subsidization and costs; it is our view that not enough is known at the moment concerning the difficulties of adjusting to the use of a processing centre to be able to recommend a fixed rate of subsidization. However in order to ensure a sizeable commitment of book budgets, a high level of participation and, when necessary, a sharing of the costs of development, it is recommended that the South Central Regional Board pay travel costs for all library staff members meeting to discuss participation in the NRLS centre, all transportation costs for the delivery of finished books from SCRLS headquarters to the participating libraries and pay the processing charges of all volumes in excess of 50% of the total acquisitions of each participating library. This policy to be reviewed before June 1976.

6. There are two specific areas of cooperation which we hope will be given consideration by the Hamilton Public Library. Because of the use of a new book display in the selection routines of the H.P.L. system it would seem logical for NRLS to arrange a display for the South Central libraries to use in cooperation with H.P.L. This display could be housed in the H.P.L. technical services area or in the SCRLS headquarters and would be used by H.P.L. staff as well as staff from the region.

This cooperative arrangement would lead to some coordination of the regional collections including Hamilton and the cost of mounting the display could be shared three ways. It is, of course, understood the H.P.L. could add titles if it wished to but that the core of the display would consist of the same titles as those offered for selection to NRLS libraries in St. Catharines and included in the list of display titles circulated throughout the 2 regions.

7. It is recommended that consideration be given to the regular computer-assisted production of one union catalogue of the accessions of the libraries of NRLS, SCRLS and the H.P.L. as a spin-off of cooperation between the two regions.

APPENDIX

THE DORLS TECHNICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE STANDARDS FOR CATALOGING, CLASSIFICATION AND FILING

The standards proposed by this Committee are made within the context of the following trends and developments in library practises:

1. Centralized processing whether done by cooperating libraries, or by a commercial firm.

2. Orientation to Library of Congress standards, and the eventual application of the MARC tapes.

3. The impact of communication's technology on the exchange of information, and the growth of library networks as evidenced in union catalogs and their use in inter-library loans.

In the light of these pressing and far-reaching developments this Committee recommends that all processing within the regional library systems in Ontario be standardized as follows:

1. That original cataloging be done using the latest tools:

   a. The Anglo-American cataloging rules as applied by the Library of Congress.

   b. The Dewey decimal classification and relative index, 17th ed. Canadian literature is to be classified in 819. When the subject interest is strong biographies are to be classified with the subject. Individual biography with no strong subject orientation is B. the 920's are to be used for collective biographies lacking a strong or uniform subject interest.

   c. U.S. Library of Congress. Subject Cataloging Division. Subject headings used in the dictionary catalogs of the Library of Congress, 7th ed. Where French translations are required use those adopted by the Library of Parliament in Ottawa.

   d. Canadian Library Association. Technical Services Section. A list of Canadian subject headings. Use in conjunction with LC to emphasize Canadian subjects.

2. That catalog copy as provided by the Library of Congress be accepted as given. Exceptions (there should be very few) must be defined within each region. Catalog copy from other major sources, e.g., Canadiana, BNB, Biblio, be accepted on a no-conflict basis.

3. That distinctive book numbers be discontinued. Use the first three letters of the main entry, or biographee, as applicable. Reduce names beginning with Mac to Mc for this purpose.

4. And that filing be done in accordance with the American Library Association. Subcommittee on the ALA Rules for Filing Catalog Cards. ALA rules for filing catalog cards, 2d ed.

In the opinion of the Committee these recommendations apply equally to French and English, and to adult and juvenile materials. Where applicable they are also valid for special collections, whether processed centrally or locally.

Adopted by DORLS,
February, 1970.

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